

AMENDMENTS TO THE SPECIFICATION

Please replace Paragraph [0002] on Page 1 with the following paragraph:

[0002] The exhaust system of most, if not all, automotive vehicles are provided with catalytic converters that reburn unburned gas coming from the engine. More specifically, the catalytic converter contains a material that acts as a catalyst to convert most unburned hydrocarbons and carbon monoxide into water vapor, carbon dioxide, NOx and lesser toxic gases.

Please replace Paragraph [0003] on Page 1 with the following paragraph:

[0003] Since catalytic converters operate at very high temperatures, they are typically provided with an external heat shield. However, it has been found that these heat shields produce a significant component of noise, vibration, and harshness (NVH) NVH originating from the exhaust system. For example, catalytic converter systems with a heat shield may produce at least several dB higher noise levels than systems without heat shields. Therefore, original equipment manufacturers are willing to pay for and are demanding ~~for~~ improved heat shields that significantly reduce the noise from the exhaust system related to NVH.

Please replace Paragraph [0031] on Page 9 with the following paragraph:

[0031] Component level vibration and NVH tests were also conducted on the four aforementioned heat shield samples. Each sample was suspended from a frame using rubber surgical tubing. A modal ~~hammer~~ hammer was used to provide the force input into the sample, for example, at the location 50 shown in FIG. 5B. The response was measured by a microphone mounted about 20 cm away from the sample and by an accelerometer magnetically attached to the underside of the sample at the coating location.

No new matter is added by these amendments.